

VZCZCXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHUNV #0003/01 0090826
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 090826Z JAN 09
FM USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8879
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0247
AFGHA/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 0158
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 0074
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS

UNCLAS UNVIE VIENNA 000003

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [PREL](#) [EUN](#) [NATO](#) [AF](#) [IR](#) [CA](#) [GM](#) [JA](#) [PK](#) [SW](#) [UN](#)

SUBJECT: AFGHAN MINISTERS TALK COUNTERNARCOTICS IN VIENNA

SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) On the margins of the Paris Pact meeting in Vienna on December 15-16, Ambassador and DCM met with Afghanistan's Minister of Counternarcotics General Khodaidad, Deputy Minister of Interior General Daud Daud, and other Afghan officials. The Ministers complained about the lack of counternarcotics funding from nations other than the U.S., stressed the importance of "quick, visible" rewards to discourage poppy cultivation, described their goal for eradication in 2009, and expressed their concern over the lack of ISAF action, against drug targets and the slow progress in cooperation efforts with Iran and Pakistan. Ambassador informed them that UNVIE had been engaging Canada and Germany on the Good Performers Initiative (GPI), which should resonate with these countries' counter-narcotics policies that are focused on "soft" measures (development assistance) rather than hard measures (eradication). Ambassador also suggested that the Afghans engage Sweden, which is interested in intensifying its work in Afghanistan. End Summary.

U.S. "Only Contributor"
to CN in Afghanistan

¶2. (SBU) Minister Khodaidad and Deputy Minister Daud said that for the past year and a half only the U.S. had contributed to counternarcotics and they were deeply grateful. This support included their ability to travel to the provinces and meet with governors and key officials that can have an impact on counternarcotics. Khodaidad expressed concern for the lack of interest in funding the counternarcotics effort among others in the donor community. In particular, he cited the need for more support from the EU, EC, Japan, and Canada. Ambassador informed that UNVIE has been engaging Canada and Germany on GPI. The program should resonate with countries like these because their counternarcotics policies tend to focus on "soft" measures (development assistance) rather than hard measures (eradication). In addition to engaging those states, Ambassador also suggested that the Afghans engage Sweden as the Foreign Minister is interested in intensifying his government's work in Afghanistan.

Need to Increase Quick Impact Projects

¶3. (SBU) When asked about the situation in the south, Khodaidad explained that a lot of funding has been provided to Helmand, Kandahar, and Oruzgan over the years by partner nations to combat narcotics, but the impact has been minimal in deterring further cultivation. In his view, infrastructure takes 15-20 years to put in

place, not quick enough to reward farmers who turn away from poppy. He added that Afghans do not like to grow poppy and do so under pressure from Taliban, traffickers, or from dire economic circumstances. Therefore, he said, visible and quick rewards from governors can have a profound impact. Khodaidad believes in the need to publicize the fact that development assistance is provided as a reward for the Afghans' stance against poppy cultivation. He is engaging other ministries to publicize their projects/assistance in this perspective. Daud expressed appreciation for information on drug trafficking provided by the U.S. and U.K., which resulted in arrests in Nimroz province. Both Ministers stated that significant proceeds from the drug trade ("black money") are being deposited in Dubai and Switzerland.

Progress on Eradication Preparations

14. (SBU) Daud said that the Poppy Eradication Force (PEF) and Counter Narcotics Infantry Kandak (CNIK) had begun joint operations training on December 14 and that they planned to deploy to Helmand and Farah. Their eradication goal for 2009 is "206,000 hectares" (he probably meant 20,600 or 26,000 hectares). They were confident that governor led eradication (GLE) would take place this year in Kandahar and Oruzgan. Daud said he expected 26-27 poppy free provinces this year. In his view, a few million dollars in Good Performers Initiative (GPI) rewards for each province is not enough. He believed that \$10-20 million per province were necessary. He estimated that if this amount were made available through the GPI, there would be no need for an eradication program. Ambassador cautioned that the U.S. believes in a balanced approach of incentives and disincentives.

ISAF Support for CN Operations

15. (SBU) Khodaidad expressed concern that ISAF forces had not begun to target drug labs. He has made clear to partner nations that the GOA is not inviting ISAF to support the police during eradication, but only needs them for interdiction support. Still, he feels the commitment made in Budapest (in October by the NATO defense ministers) is not clear to many states. Ambassador added that UNODC Executive Director Antonio Costa is one of the strongest supporters of ISAF drug interdiction operations.

Afghan Cooperation with
Pakistan and Iran

16. (SBU) On cooperation with Pakistan and Iran, Minister Khodaidad explained that progress was slow and communication occurred mainly through the UN or UK. The respective ministries only communicate via the international community but not face-to-face. This situation is lamentable because 85% of the heroin is trafficked via Iran and Pakistan and several major traffickers live in Iran. Recently 360 gallons of acetic anhydride (AA) were seized for the first time in Iran. To advance Afghan-Iranian cooperation, the Ministry of Counternarcotics is avoiding political issues and trying to engage through technical cooperation.

Comment

17. (SBU) Given 2008 data, Daud's goals for eradication (even at 20,600 hectares) and poppy-free provinces (26-27) sounded ambitious. Khodaidad, while expressing appreciation for U.S. assistance, seemed concerned and unsure about re-engaging other partners on the issue of counternarcotics. He obviously was eager for ISAF participation in narcotics interdiction operations. Both ministers recognized the link between reward and eradication, and the importance of contributions to the Good Performers Initiative from other partner nations. While Daud's plea for doubling the reward for poppy-free provinces is understandable, he should also understand that there should be a balance between incentives and disincentives.

